



City of Lewiston

27 Pine Street
Lewiston, Maine 04240

City of Auburn

60 Court Street
Auburn, Maine 04210



JOINT LEWISTON AUBURN CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2016
5:15 PM – Informal Gathering with Refreshments
6:00 PM -- Workshop
LEWISTON CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

1. History/Background of LA 911

This would be a short summary of the history of LA911 and how the 1978 dispatch arrangement changed to the current system in 1996.

2. Overview of Proposed LA 911 Budget, Including Fund Balance Practice/Policy

3. Review of Impact of Potential Budget Reduction

4. Requirement of Inter-Local Agreement

5. Discussion of Long-Term Options

- a. Each city establish its own PSAP/Dispatch Center
- b. LA 911 as a PSAP only with individual dispatch centers:
- c. Contract with Third Party for PSAP with individual dispatch centers
- d. Other Options?

6. Capital Needs/Issues:

LA 911 is currently operating with antiquated equipment that must be replaced and with a radio network infrastructure that struggles to meet public safety needs and required coverage. Both communities recently committed Homeland Security Grant money to hire a consultant to conduct a needs assessment and assist with development of an RFP. The basic study of needs and shortcomings has been completed. However, the replacement/upgrade project cannot move forward without the needed capital funding.

7. General Discussion.

Lewiston Fire Department

Central Fire Station

2 College Street • Lewiston, ME 04240

Memo

To: Edward A. Barrett, City Administrator

From: Chief Paul M. LeClair

Date: May 25, 2016

Re: LA911 Background

The inter-local agreement between the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn creating the Lewiston Auburn 911 Committee (LA911) was signed in 1978.

The purpose of the Committee was to establish, operate and maintain a 911 Emergency Communication System for the Lewiston-Auburn Area. The initial step was for all Emergency 911 calls for Lewiston/Auburn to be answered by Lewiston and Auburn Fire Dispatchers operating jointly from a call center located on the 2nd floor of Lewiston's Central Fire Station. Each Fire Department assigned one dispatcher per shift to this 24 hour operation. The Lewiston and Auburn Police departments maintained separate dispatch operations at their respective headquarters. 911 calls for police emergencies were transferred to the respective police agency, and the Police department dispatcher then dispatched the call to the Patrol Officer/Car.

During that same time period, the Lewiston and Auburn Public Works Departments also maintained some level of dispatch operations at their facilities. After working hours Public Works calls are now also handled by LA911.

Almost 20 years later in 1996, the Lewiston – Auburn 911 Committee was funded to consolidate all Police and Fire Dispatch services to one location, Auburn Central Fire. This location now handles all public safety answering point (PSAP) requirements and dispatching services for the public safety departments of both communities.

The major driver in the 1996 decision to consolidate PSAP and dispatch services at one location was the need to replace and upgrade all emergency services related radio equipment and dispatcher station console equipment. Consolidating to one location provided a savings for each City primarily through avoiding duplicate capital costs for purchasing back up console stations as well as by reducing costs related to connectivity and installation. The consolidation also created an environment where the dispatchers for the four agencies are able to support each other during emergency situations and provided the 911 Director the ability to build a staffing schedule fitted to peak call volume by time of day and day of week.

Also during this time period, the public safety agencies transitioned to a digital/analog radio signal and equipment based system. New radio towers and sites, along with signal amplification voter receiver

units, were installed in the Lewiston Auburn area focusing on maximizing radio signal effectiveness and reach for Lewiston and Auburn Police and Fire units without regard to geographic borders.

In 2004, the four Public Safety Agencies joined together with the Androscoggin County Sheriff and other Towns with law enforcement entities in a county wide effort to obtain a Homeland Security Grant to fund the implementation of our current Records Management and Computer Aided Dispatch system. Roughly one million dollars in grant funding was dedicated to this joint initiative. The LA 911 Communication Center serves as the Headquarters for all IMC records created and accessed by Lewiston – Auburn Police and Fire and the Androscoggin Sheriff Patrol and Jail Division.

LA 911's current Capital Improvement plan calls for upgrading and replacing communications center equipment purchased during the 1996 consolidation and radio upgrade. Also included are new radio signal tower sites for both Lewiston and Auburn designed to address current "dead-spots" where public safety personnel in the field are unable to communicate consistently with LA 911 via their mobile radios.

To: Honorable Elected Officials of Lewiston and Auburn
Fr: Edward A. Barrett
Su: LA 911

The Auburn City Manager has proposed a budget for the coming year that reduces Auburn's share of the LA 911 budget by \$217,000. The Lewiston City Council has adopted a budget that provides for the funding requested. This potential differential must be addressed for the coming year.

Terms of the Interlocal Agreement

The Interlocal Agreement requires that the 911 Committee prepare and submit a budget to both communities identifying the amount of funding required and that the cities meet to jointly review the budget. The cost is to be split 50/50. If either City Council does not approve the apportionment, both cities are to include in their budgets for the next fiscal year an amount equal to what they actually budgeted for the previous year, less any costs of contemplated capital improvements.

The applicable provisions of the interlocal agreement are attached.

Immediate Issue

The immediate issue is the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year. It is my understanding that a committee of the Auburn City Council has recommended that full funding for LA 911 be restored. It is also clear from reports of Auburn's discussion of this issue that there is some sentiment there to possibly renegotiate the existing interlocal agreement, particularly as it relates to cost allocation. Should Auburn restore full funding, the immediate issue would be resolved. Longer term issues might, however, remain, and it is worth summarizing what some of those options might be.

Longer-Term Options

While there are a number of longer-term options, it is unlikely that any of them could be implemented in the intermediate-term, if at all. Some of these are outlined below:

- Create a separate Public Safety Answering Point and Dispatch Center serving Lewiston alone. LA 911 operates as both a Public Safety Answering Point and a dispatch center for both cities. Under state law, Androscoggin County is limited to two PSAPs and is currently at this limit with LA 911 and the Sheriff's Department the two designated agencies. It is unlikely that the PUC, which regulates PSAPs, would agree to splitting this function and creating a third center. It is also unclear how the PUC would rule if both communities petitioned to obtain sole rights to the PSAP operation. Divorcing the two communities would also involve potentially significant capital costs, although it

should be noted that LA 911 as a combined entity also faces capital costs associated with equipment replacement and gaps in radio coverage. Even if possible, implementing this option would take time.

- Contracting for PSAP services and establishing a separate dispatch center for each community. It is possible for a community to contract for PSAP services while having its own dispatch center. It appears, however, that this is currently impractical given the volume of 911 calls handled, the incompatible computer aided dispatch systems in use at various PSAPs, and radio interoperability problems. The most likely option would be to contract with Androscoggin County for this service; however, the County currently does not have the space, personnel, equipment, and expertise to assume this function, and it is unclear what it would cost, both for capital equipment and annual operating support.
- Maintaining LA 911 as a PSAP only with each community providing its own dispatch services. Separation of the PSAP and dispatch functions is both less effective and less efficient in that calls for assistance must be transferred from the original answering point to the appropriate dispatch center, delaying response times and increasing cost due to the separation of call answering and dispatch functions, which reduces the efficiency of employee use. It would also require a significant capital investment to establish and equip separate dispatch centers.

Given all of this, it appears that it would be virtually impossible in the short run and difficult, but not impossible, in the long run to end the joint operation of LA 911. In effect, Lewiston and Auburn are currently more or less tied together where, even if we both wanted to, it would be difficult to separate.

Basis for the Cost Sharing Arrangement

The current agreement allocates the cost of 911 on a 50/50 basis. The underlying rationale for this is that if both cities operated their own PSAP/dispatch centers, it is likely that staffing requirements and individual community costs would be similar. Even though the two communities differ in population, both are large enough that it is unlikely that staffing and costs would vary greatly given 24/7 coverage and workload requirements.

It appears, however, that Auburn may wish to transition the cost allocation system to some other basis. There are a number of potential options, including but not limited to continuing the current cost sharing system, using state adjusted assessed value, population, 911 calls for service, incidents tracked by the records management system (which would include both resident calls to 911 and public safety personnel initiated activities), as well as others or a mixed system. Each of these has potential advantages and disadvantages. In addition, consideration could be given to separating operating and capital costs where specific capital costs are of primary benefit to one jurisdiction.

Conclusion

It is clear that a combined LA 911 is the only immediate option available, and the existing interlocal agreement prescribes how it is to be funded. If the Councils are supportive of discussing changes to this agreement, I would suggest that this occur as part of an overall review of the current 911 operation, its capital needs, and all potential alternatives. Everything should be on the table for discussion.

ARTICLE V - ANNUAL EXPENSES AND REVENUES

The Committee will annually prepare a budget for its next fiscal year, itemizing expenses of operations, maintenance and repairs, costs of contemplated capital improvements, and payments of principal and interest on fixed indebtedness and other borrowing. The budget will also include such other details as to present assets, surplus, accounts receivable, expenses, and liabilities as the Committee shall deem advisable and as the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn may reasonably require. The Committee will also estimate all anticipated revenues of the Committee for the forthcoming fiscal year.

NOTICE OF APPORTIONMENT

In any year in which it is anticipated expenses exceed anticipated revenues, the Committee shall give notice of apportionment to the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn.

Such notice of apportionment will be submitted to each city in time for inclusion in their respective budgets for their next fiscal year.

The Cities of Lewiston & Auburn agree to meet jointly prior to May 31st of each year to review the Committee's budget. Upon approval of the majority of the members of the Lewiston & Auburn City Councils the Committee's budget and amount of the apportionment, the Cities of Lewiston & Auburn agree to include said apportionment in their respective city budgets for the coming fiscal year and shall make provisions through assessment of taxes or otherwise to obtain sufficient revenues to pay the same.

The proportionate share of each City shall be calculated on the basis of fifty percent (50%) of the difference.

If either the City Council of Lewiston or Auburn do not approve an apportionment, the City of Auburn and the City of Lewiston will include in their respective budgets, for the coming fiscal year, an amount equal to their respective apportionment for the previous year, less any part of those apportionments representing the costs of contemplated capital improvements.

Lewiston-Auburn 9-1-1 Emergency Communications System

Phyllis Gamache, Director
552 Minot Avenue, Auburn, Maine 04210
207.786.5380 ~ 207.795.0743 fax



Funding sources for Maine Public Safety Answering Points

At Mayor LaBonte's request, I have researched the funding formulas used by the larger Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Maine. I've used the top five 9-1-1 and dispatch centers, listed in highest to lowest order, as measured by call volume. Below is a brief breakdown, followed by an explanation of each:

| PSAP | Funding Mechanism | Service Area | 9-1-1 Call Volume | Population (2010) | Governance |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------|--|---|
| Portland PD | Taxed based for Portland/SoPo. Split established through interlocal agreement. One contractual agreement. | Portland, SoPo Separate contract with Cape E. | 177 per day | Portland: 66,072 So. Portland: 24,968 | Both city managers, each police and fire chief |
| Department of Public Safety - Gray | Serviced agencies billed via policy developed via Statute: <u>State agencies</u> : call volume <u>Municipal</u> : costs for needed staff only; no capital costs | Southern Maine; all state law enforcement agencies (MSP, Wardens, Marine Patrol, etc); 8 local fire contracts | 158 per day | n/a | Department of Public Safety; Policy board established to create funding mechanism. Board eventually disestablished. |
| LA911 | Interlocal agreement: Primary agencies split all costs 50/50. Two contracts with town of Poland; one call volume, one charged per cap | Lewiston, Auburn, Poland | 115 per day | Lewiston: 36,576 (61.35%) Auburn: 23,045 (38.65%) | Each public safety chief, one city councilor from each city, one citizen rep from each city, one member at large that rotates between cities every three years. |
| Penobscot County Regional Comm Ctr | Primarily county taxes; Contracts (including PSAP contract with Aroostook county) charged pe cap | All of Penobscot, all 9-1-1 calls from Aroostook. | 111 | Penobscot: 153,826 Aroostook: 71,708 | County Manager |
| Cumberland County Regional Comm Ctr | Primarily county taxes; Contracts: Police, fire and rescue costs \$19.94 per ; Fire and Rescue only cost \$6.73 per cap Funding by but not used by Portland and South Portland | Cumberland County | 66 | Cumberland County: 281,395 | County Manager |

When compared to LA911, the most similar PSAP organizationally and operationally is the *Portland Regional Communications Center*. Portland and South Portland began the process of combining PSAPs and dispatch centers in 2007, and fully integrated both systems in 2012. Like LA911, the Portland RCC is governed by an interlocal agreement which defines the following:

- **Funding:** When the Portland/SoPo interlocal agreement was initially drafted, the cities agreed to a base funding formula of 67.43% for Portland and 32.57% for South Portland. This original split was achieved by combining both pre-existing PSAPs and each city's percentage of the total. This 67.43/32.57 split is considered their base year cost, sets the benchmark for future funding and includes all personnel-related costs, capital and technology. When the cost of the

Portland RCC matches the base year cost, the split remains 67.43/32.57. In years when the Portland RCC budget exceeds the base year cost (which is now the more common situation) the overage above the base year rate is divided by capita, which is currently a 72.6/27.4 split.

- Like Lewiston and Auburn, Portland and South Portland pay county taxes to support a county-based PSAP they do not use.
- Like the LA911 agreement, capital costs that are specific to each city, such as portable radios and vehicle mounted radios, are the responsibility of each city. Shared equipment, like the infrastructure that allows those portable and car radios to communicate, are divided by the base rate.
- None of Portland and South Portland's funding formula takes call volume into consideration. It is all calculated on the original base formula and the per capita formula.
- Contracts: Cape Elizabeth's contract with the Portland RCC is a legacy contract that previously existed with South Portland and is a per capita formula. The income from that contract is applied to the bottom line and is deducted from each city's cost as outlined in the agreement.

The *Department of Public Safety* operates four PSAPs in Maine: Gray, Augusta, Houlton and Bangor. All four DPS PSAPs used to come under the purview of the Maine State Police, but the move to the Department of Public Safety generated a law directing the creation of a policy board to oversee the Centers' funding mechanisms. That policy board, which was made up of state and municipal leaders and public safety heads, determined:

- Funding: The primary users of the dispatch system are the state law enforcement entities. This includes the Maine State Police, the Maine Warden Service, Maine Marine Patrol, Fish and Wildlife, etc. The cost of operating the four centers (personnel, capital, technology) is charged out to the agencies based on call volume generated by each agency. Currently 77% of the call volume generates from the Maine State Police, so state police carry 77% of the costs of all four centers.
- Contracts: The contracts negotiated with the local DPS centers are based on the human costs of taking on that particular entity. If the addition of a local fire department requires DPS Gray take on 1 additional person, the cost of that person is charged to the contracted agency. There is no per capita or volume element to this calculation.
- The policy board considered both per capita and call volume funding strategies in determining their primary funding formula and nearly unanimously came down on the side of call volume.

Penobscot County Regional Communications Center serves as the PSAP for all of Penobscot County and has a PSAP contract with all of Aroostook County. The Center is an independent county department and the Executive Director works directly for the County Commissioners.

- Funding: Penobscot RCC, like nearly all other county-based communications centers, is primarily funded through county taxes, including all personnel, capital and technology.
- Contracts: Penobscot County serves as the 9-1-1 answering point for all of Aroostook County after Aroostook closed its PSAP's doors. The contract was negotiated under the previous director and the formula used is not clear to the current director. The contract does include a 2.5% annual escalator. There are also three fire contracts with small municipalities in Aroostook that range from 3.80 to 4.16 per capita

Cumberland County Regional Communications Center, like Penobscot, is a county-funded entity that reports to the County Manager. Similar to the relationship between Lewiston and Auburn and Androscoggin County, Cumberland County is funded by two large cities that do not use their services.

- Funding: Cumberland RCC is primarily funded through county taxes, including all personnel, capital and technology.
- Contracts: Cumberland RCC has multiple contracts that cover the cost of the staff necessary for the contract only, and does not include fringe personnel costs, capital or technology. All contracts include a 3% escalator. Contract rates are as follows:
 - Municipalities that contract for police, fire and rescue communications services are charged 19.94 per capita.
 - Municipalities that contract for fire and rescue communications only are charged \$6.73 per capita.

**Lewiston-Auburn 9-1-1
Emergency Communications System**

Phyllis Gamache, Director
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Lewiston-Auburn Volume Usage Comparison

As discussed in previous documents, there are various methods used around the country to determine cost sharing in consolidated 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points and dispatch centers. Two of the most common are *9-1-1 call volume* and *calls for service*.

9-1-1 call volume is generally referred to as a call-per-day measurement. That measurement helps centers determine the number of staff necessary to manage the incoming 9-1-1 call volume, with consideration given to peak periods and spikes associated with multiple cellular callers reporting the same incident. At LA911, peak periods are generally from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., however this fluctuates based on day of the week, weather and recreational and sporting events occurring in the cities.

This measurement does not include incoming business calls. In 2014, the last year in which LA911 was able to track the number of incoming business calls, the center managed more than 450 incoming call on business lines, many of which are calls from citizens reluctant to call 9-1-1.

An analysis of incoming 9-1-1 calls in 2015 revealed:

| <u>9-1-1 call type</u> | <u>Auburn</u> | <u>Lewiston</u> |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Wireless | 10,492 | 18,546 |
| VOIP | 1,950 | 3,110 |
| PBX | 52 | 834 |
| Pay phone | 160 | 236 |
| Busn | <u>1,822</u> | <u>2,018</u> |
| | 14,476 | 24,744 |
| Total LA call volume: | | 39,220 |
| | 36.91% | 63.09% |
| 9-1-1 calls per day | 39.66 | 67.79 |

The *calls for service* measurement is a more inclusive snapshot of the amount of response work handled by a department. It includes police, fire and ems response to a 9-1-1 calls, as well as anything generated by the department. *Calls for service* includes police traffic stops, field interviews, property site checks, bail and sex offender checks, follow up from previous fire and police incidents, anytime a cruiser, firetruck or ambulance is flagged down, online burn permits, traffic enforcement and specialty details, among other things. All of these incidents are logged, tracked and documented by dispatch.

In 2015, public safety responders in Lewiston and Auburn handled 93,079 *calls for service*. Of those *calls for service*, 54.48% of them, or 50,708 calls, were Lewiston calls, while 45.52% of them, or 42,371, were Auburn calls.

LEWISTON 9-1-1 COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE -
 BUDGET AND ACTUAL – GENERAL FUND – BUDGETARY BASIS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015
 (WITH COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR JUNE 30, 2014)

| | Budgeted Amounts | | Actual | Variance with Final Budget Positive (Negative) | 2014 Actual |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| | Original | Final | | | |
| Revenues: | | | | | |
| Intergovernmental - Lewiston/Auburn | \$ 2,098,772 | \$ 2,098,772 | \$ 2,102,752 | \$ 3,980 | \$ 2,061,605 |
| Intergovernmental - other | 56,017 | 56,017 | 56,017 | - | 152,328 |
| Rental income | 6,301 | 6,301 | 6,953 | 652 | 6,118 |
| Investment income | 500 | 500 | 1,045 | 545 | 1,028 |
| Total revenues | <u>2,161,590</u> | <u>2,161,590</u> | <u>2,166,767</u> | <u>5,177</u> | <u>2,221,079</u> |
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Current: | | | | | |
| Salaries and benefits | 1,495,291 | 1,495,291 | 1,417,619 | 77,672 | 1,448,291 |
| Insurance | 372,029 | 372,029 | 269,538 | 102,491 | 286,371 |
| Supplies and materials | 3,954 | 3,954 | 3,516 | 438 | 3,458 |
| Repairs and maintenance | 91,474 | 91,474 | 75,861 | 15,613 | 87,746 |
| Telephone and utilities | 118,669 | 118,669 | 78,833 | 39,836 | 103,432 |
| Other | 27,411 | 27,411 | 26,781 | 630 | 20,718 |
| Debt service | 47,238 | 47,238 | 56,901 | (9,663) | 36,507 |
| Capital outlay | 81,284 | 81,284 | 58,220 | 23,064 | 139,849 |
| Total expenditures | <u>2,237,350</u> | <u>2,237,350</u> | <u>1,987,269</u> | <u>250,081</u> | <u>2,126,372</u> |
| Net change in fund balance | <u>\$ (75,760)</u> | <u>\$ (75,760)</u> | <u>179,498</u> | <u>\$ 255,258</u> | <u>94,707</u> |
| Fund balance, beginning of year | | | <u>240,072</u> | | <u>145,365</u> |
| Fund balance, end of year | | | <u>\$ 419,570</u> | | <u>\$ 240,072</u> |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

LEWISTON-AUBURN 9-1-1 COMMITTEE
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances
Budget and Actual
General Fund

For the year ended June 30, 2014
(with comparative totals for June 30, 2013)

| | Budgeted amounts | | Actual | Variance with final budget positive (negative) | 2013 Actual |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|---|------------------|
| | Original | Final | | | |
| Revenues: | | | | | |
| Intergovernmental - Lewiston/Auburn | \$ 2,073,703 | 2,073,703 | 2,061,605 | (12,098) | 2,070,312 |
| Intergovernmental - other | 53,951 | 53,951 | 152,328 | 98,377 | 41,113 |
| Rental income | 6,118 | 6,118 | 6,118 | - | 5,562 |
| Investment income | 500 | 500 | 1,028 | 528 | 677 |
| Total revenues | 2,134,272 | 2,134,272 | 2,221,079 | 86,807 | 2,117,664 |
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Current: | | | | | |
| Salaries and benefits | 1,467,182 | 1,467,182 | 1,448,291 | 18,891 | 1,384,822 |
| Insurance | 361,346 | 361,346 | 286,371 | 74,975 | 256,413 |
| Supplies and materials | 5,224 | 5,224 | 3,458 | 1,766 | 5,705 |
| Repairs and maintenance | 92,116 | 92,116 | 87,746 | 4,370 | 82,995 |
| Telephone and utilities | 113,996 | 113,996 | 103,432 | 10,564 | 150,884 |
| Other | 27,412 | 27,412 | 20,718 | 6,694 | 21,488 |
| Capital outlay | 30,492 | 30,492 | 139,849 | (109,357) | 108,884 |
| Debt service | 36,504 | 36,504 | 36,507 | (3) | 37,798 |
| Total expenditures | 2,134,272 | 2,134,272 | 2,126,372 | 7,900 | 2,048,989 |
| Net change in fund balance | - | - | 94,707 | 94,707 | 68,675 |
| Fund balance, beginning of year | | | 145,365 | | 76,690 |
| Fund balance, end of year | \$ | | 240,072 | | 145,365 |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.